

-----  
Title: Codex Maleficarum                      volume I (a)

Author: Annatar  
-----

Renunciation  
of the Light

Sooner or later, the  
would-be Infernalist  
decides to curse the  
light. With a formal  
oath, he declares his  
hate to his former  
gods and tramples  
symbols of their  
power. Again, he he  
does this of his own  
will; others might  
entice or threaten him  
to do it, but the oath  
must be made in a  
clear state of mind.  
Once it's done, the new  
Infernalist casts his  
lot with Darkness. He  
chooses his Word, and  
that word is NO.

If the quester  
hasn't already joined a  
coven or sect, this  
stage usually marks  
his initiation into one.  
This isn't a universal  
step; many  
Infernalists hate  
company and  
forswear even the  
most demented  
companions. But if a  
diabolist craves  
instruction and  
fellowship in sin, he  
has to renounce all  
goodness in his heart  
to enter. For  
Infernalists who grow  
up in degenerate  
tribes, this step is  
easy: what's to  
renounce? But for an  
initiate with some

semblance of  
normalcy, this ritual  
marks the point of no  
return.

Many initiates  
don't realize how large  
a step it is. In the  
hedonistic, irreverent  
climate of the society,  
some people join dark  
covens simply for the  
thrill of it. Fun or  
not, the renunciation  
is deadly serious to  
the demons that are  
inevitably paying  
attention. Anyone who  
seems like a worthy  
candidate for  
full-blown corruption  
is noted, approached,  
and very possible  
enlisted among the  
armies of the damned.

### The Cold Thrust

If awareness yields  
to Awakening, the  
initiate finds himself  
impaled on the icy  
horns - or more  
appropriately, phallus  
- of Enlightenment.  
For one who pursues  
the darkest  
Mysteries, this  
moment is a rape of  
the soul. Every fear,  
every doubt, every  
screaming terror the  
initiate has ever felt  
rips through him like  
a gutter's hook. At this  
moment, he stands at  
the edge of Hell and  
gets a taste of it. The  
experience isn't  
pleasant.

Some sects, induce  
this moment with  
harsh rituals. After  
the Infernalist has  
sworn his loyalty, the  
other officiants beat  
and otherwise torment

him until he either  
snaps into Awakening,  
becomes a gibbering  
wreck or falls  
unconsciousness.

It may be a prelude  
to a wondrous career,  
but the Cold Thrust is  
always torturous. It  
literally scars the  
soul, tears it open on a  
spiritual level. No  
matter what the  
diabolist does, this  
moment will haunt  
him like no other.  
Some initiates snap  
forever at this point  
and become demented.  
Some even die from  
the shock. Those who  
endure with their  
wits intact become the  
most dangerous kind  
of magi: Those who  
have gone to Hell and  
returned.